IN THE CLAIMS:

The following is a complete listing of the claims in this application, reflects all changes currently being made to the claims, and replaces all earlier versions and all earlier listings of the claims:

1. (Currently Amended) An image processing apparatus for correcting [[a]] the positional offset [[of]] between an input image and ~~with respect to~~ a reference image, comprising:

storage means for storing information about the reference image, including a reference position;

area information specifying means for obtaining information about a plurality of areas included in the input image, the information including left end coordinates and upper end coordinates of the plurality of areas;

target position ~~calculating~~ setting means for obtaining a leftmost end coordinate from among the left end coordinates of the plurality of areas included in ~~calculating a target position on the input image on the basis of~~ the information obtained by said area information specifying means, obtaining an uppermost end coordinate from among the upper end coordinates of the plurality of areas, and setting the obtained leftmost end coordinate and the uppermost end coordinate as a target position;

calculating means for specifying information about the reference image in accordance with the input image from said storage means, and calculating [[a]] the positional offset between the reference position included in the specified information and the target

position set by said target position setting means; and

correcting means for correcting positions of a plurality of areas included in the input image by using the positional offset calculated by said calculating means.

2. (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said area information specifying means extracts [[an]] the plurality of [[area]] areas based on attributes ~~having the same attribute~~ from the input image ~~to specify~~, and specifies information including ~~an attribute, size, and position~~ attributes, sizes, and positional coordinates of the plurality of areas.

3. (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 2, wherein the ~~attribute includes~~ attributes include a table attribute, text attribute, title attribute, and frame attribute.

4. (Canceled)

5. (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said target position ~~calculating~~ setting means further comprises removing means for removing an unstable area from a plurality of areas included in the input image, and calculates [[a]] the target position for the input image by using areas left after area removal is performed by said removing means.

6. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 5, wherein the unstable area is a noise area.

7. (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 5, wherein said removing means removes an area having a score less than a predetermined score from [[a]] the plurality of areas included in the input image.

8. (Currently Amended) An image processing method of correcting a positional offset [[of]] between an input image ~~with respect to~~ and a reference image, comprising:

[[the]] an area information specifying step, of obtaining information about a plurality of areas included in the input image, the information including left end coordinates and upper end coordinates of the plurality of areas;

[[the]] a target position setting ~~calculating~~ step, of ~~calculating a target position on the input image on the basis of~~ obtaining a leftmost end coordinate from among the left end coordinates of the plurality of areas included in the information obtained in [[the]] said area information specifying step, obtaining an uppermost end coordinate from among the upper end coordinates of the plurality of areas, and setting the obtained leftmost end coordinate and the uppermost end coordinate as a target position;

[[the]] a calculating step, of specifying information about the reference image, the information being stored with a reference position in storage means in accordance with the input image from the storage means, and calculating a positional offset between the reference position included in the specified information and the target position set in said target position

setting step; and

[[the]] a correcting step, of correcting positions of a plurality of areas included in the input image by using the positional offset calculated in [[the]] said calculating step.

9. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 8, wherein [[the]] said target position ~~calculating~~ setting step further comprises [[the]] a removing step of removing an unstable area from a plurality of areas included in the input image, and [[a]] the target position for the input image is calculated by using areas left after area removal is performed in the removing step.

10. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable storage medium storing program codes for executing an image processing method of correcting a positional offset [[of]] between an input image ~~with respect to~~ and a reference image, comprising:

a program code of [[the]] an area information specifying step, of obtaining information about a plurality of areas included in the input image, the information including left end coordinates and upper end coordinates of the plurality of areas;

a program code of [[the]] a target position ~~calculating~~ setting step, of ~~calculating a target position on the input image on the basis of~~ obtaining a leftmost end coordinate from among the left end coordinates of the plurality of areas included in the information obtained in the area information specifying step, obtaining an uppermost end coordinate from among the upper end coordinates of the plurality of areas, and setting the obtained leftmost end coordinate and the uppermost end coordinate as a target position;

a program code of [[the]] a calculating step, of specifying information about

the reference image, the information being stored with a reference position in storage means in accordance with the input image from the storage means, and calculating a positional offset between the reference position included in the specified information and the target position set in the target position setting step; and

a program code of [[the]] a correcting step, of correcting positions of a plurality of areas included in the input image by using the positional offset calculated in the calculating step.

11. (Currently Amended) The medium according to claim 10, wherein the target position ~~calculating~~ setting step further comprises [[the]] a removing step of removing an unstable area from a plurality of areas included in the input image, and [[a]] the target position for the input image is calculated by using areas left after area removal is performed in the removing step.